

Downham Rural District

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

YEAR 1952

Including the Report of the Senior Sanitary Inspector
(MR. G. S. SENNITT, M.R.SAN.I., M.S.I.A., A.M.INST.P.C.)

DR. C. T. DARWENT, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

Arthur Watson, Downham Market

Downham Rural District Council

Members of the Public Health Committee

Chairman: Mr. H. G. Teverson

Vice-Chairman: Mr. C. W. Thornhill

Mr. W. Addison	Mr. J. Hunter
Mr. S. Bailey	Mr. M. L. Hutson
Mr. E. Barker	Mr. H. Leonard
Mr. W. H. Bentley	Col. E. R. Pratt
Mr. A. J. Blott	Mr. S. J. Proctor
Mr. W. R. Dent	Mr. F. Starling
Mr. A. Dye	Mr. S. F. L. Warner
Mr. H. Gates	Mr. R. R. Wilde
Mr. F. Green	Mr. E. J. Wright
Mr. P. Hall	Mr. G. G. Wright

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council are *ex-officio* members of the Committee.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH:

Dr. C. T. Darwent, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

Also holds the appointments of:—

Asst. County Medical Officer of Health,

Asst. County School Medical Officer,

Medical Officer of Health to Downham Urban District,

Medical Officer of Health to Marshland Rural District.

SANITARY INSPECTOR:

G. S. Sennitt, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A., A.M.Inst.P.C.

ADDITIONAL SANITARY INSPECTOR:

G. L. Field, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

CLERK TO THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT:

Miss J. Carter.

STOKE FERRY,

June, 1953.

To The Chairman and Members of the Downham
Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit for your consideration my Annual Report on the sanitary circumstances, health and vital statistics of your district during the year ending 31st December, 1952.

The general health of the district has been satisfactory and has been entirely free from any outbreaks of the graver infectious diseases such as Poliomyelitis — Typhoid — Diphtheria and Smallpox.

The Birth Rate (16.2) compares favourably with that for the whole country, and the Death Rate (8.5) is lower than that for England and Wales. The number of Deaths has decreased by 63 from the previous year.

The number of Infectious Diseases has greatly increased owing to sporadic epidemics of Measles and Whooping Cough during the first quarter of the year.

I would like to express my appreciation of the support given me in performing my duties by the Clerk to the Council — and Officers of all departments, especially my Senior Sanitary Inspector.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

C. T. DARWENT,

Medical Officer of Health.

SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS, 1952.

Area (in acres) ....	....	....	....	....	....	124,152
Population, 1931 (Census) ....	....	....	....	....	....	19,962
Population, 1951 (Census) ....	....	....	....	....	....	24,508
Population, 1952 ....	....	....	....	....	....	24,687
Number of separate Dwellings occupied 1952 ....	....	....	....	....	....	6,499
Rateable Value, 1952 ....	....	....	....	....	....	£75,816
Product of a Penny Rate, 1952 ....	....	....	....	....	....	£310

	LIVE BIRTHS (397)			Rate		
	Total	Male	Female	Downham Rural	England & Wales	Administrative County
Legitimate	377	194	183			
Illegitimate	20	7	13			
	397	201	196	16.2	15.3	15.04

	STILL BIRTHS (Rate per 1,000 live births)					
	Total	Male	Female	Downham Rural	England & Wales	Administrative County
Legitimate	5	2	3			
Illegitimate	1	—	1			
	6	2	4	15.1	22.6	19.58

	DEATHS (all causes)			Rate		
	Total	Male	Female	Downham Rural	England & Wales	Administrative County
	218	123	95	8.51	11.3	11.29

DEATHS from Puerperal Causes:						
Puerperal and post-Abortive Sepsis	....	....	....	....	....	Nil
Other Pueperal causes	....	....	....	....	....	Nil

	INFANT MORTALITY (Rate per 1,000 live births):					
	Total	Male	Female	Downham Rural	England & Wales	Administrative County
Legitimate	10	5	5			
Illegitimate	—	—	—			
	10	5	5	25.2	27.6	28.18

DEATHS from						
Cancer (all ages)	....	....	....	....	....	36
Measles (all ages)	....	....	....	....	....	Nil
Whooping Cough	....	....	....	....	....	Nil
Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	....	....	....	....	....	1

SECTION A

Natural and Social Conditions

Area ....	....	....	....	....	....	124,152 acres
Population ....	....	....	....	....	....	24,687

DEATHS. The total number assigned to the District as given by the Registrar-General 218, a decrease of 73 on the figure for 1951. The Death Rate of 8.51 per 1,000 compares very favourably with that for England and Wales, 11.3.

BIRTHS. The number (397) shows an increase of 11 compared with last year. The birth rate is 16.2.

MATERNAL MORTALITY. There were no maternal deaths, the credit for which is due to the excellent service rendered by the District Nurses, members of the Maternity Unit and the General Practitioners.

INFANT MORTALITY. The number of infants dying under the age of one year was 10 ~~11~~. Five of these infants were under four weeks old. Prematurity was a caustive factor.

SECTION B

1. GENERAL MEDICAL SERVICES

Norfolk Executive Council, 54, Prince of Wales' Road,
Norwich. Clerk — R. J. COBB, Esq.

2. EAST ANGLIAN REGIONAL HOSPITAL BOARD

Senior Administrative Medical Officer:

DR. J. B. EWEN, M.D., D.P.H.,
Croft-Holme, 117, Chesterton Road,
Cambridge.

(a) GENERAL.

- (i) Norfolk and Norwich Hospital Norwich.
- (ii) West Norfolk & King's Lynn Hospital, King's Lynn.
- (iii) Jenny Lind Hospital, Norwich.
- (iv) St. James' Hospital, King's Lynn (for chronic sick).
- (v) The Howdale Home, Downham Market.

(b) MATERNITY.

- (i) West Norfolk & King's Lynn Hospital (Maternity Unit).
- (ii) Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge.

(c) INFECTIOUS.

- (i) County Isolation Hospital, East Dereham.
- (ii) Isolation Hospital, King's Lynn.

(d) SANATORIA.

- (i) Kelling Sanatorium, Holt.
- (ii) Bramblewood Sanatorium, Holt.

(e) MENTAL.

- (i) St. Andrew's Hospital, Norwich.
- (ii) Hellesdon Hospital, Norwich.
- (iii) Heckingham Sanatorium, Norwich.
- (iv) Little Plumstead, Norwich.

3. MATERNITY SERVICES.

(a) DISTRICT NURSES (showing Parishes and Villages served):—

Nurse Gerrard, High Street, Feltwell, Thetford.	Feltwell, Hockwold.
Nurse Hunns, Lower Green, Methwold, Thetford.	Methwold.
Nurse Smith, Nurse's Cottage, Stow, King's Lynn.	Wimbotsham, Stow, Wormegay, South Runcton.
Nurse Porter, Nurse's Home, Nordelph.	Nordelph, Downham West.
Nurse Walker, Rose Cottage, Stoke Ferry, K. Lynn.	Stoke Ferry, Whittington.
Nurse Mosley, 18, Council Houses, Wiggenhall St. Germans, King's Lynn.	Wiggenhall St. Mary the Virgin Wiggenhall St. Germans, Wig- genhall St. Mary Magdalen Watlington, Tottenham.
Nurse Horn, 27, Barton Bendish, King's Lynn.	Marham. Shouldham, Shouldham Thorpe, Strad- sett, Fineham, Barton Bendish.
Nurse Russell, High Street, Hilgay, Downham Market.	Denver, Ryston, Fordham, Hilgay.
Nurse Rushworth, Nurse's Bungalow, Southery, Downham Market.	Southery.
Nurse Williams, 2, Queen's Close, Wereham.	Crimplesham, West Dereham, Wereham, Boughton, Wretton.
Nurse Armitage, 62, Station Road, Middleton.	Seteh.

(b) MATERNITY. Beds in Regional Hospital Board Establishments:
Stow Hall Maternity Home, Stow Bardolph.

4. AMBULANCE AND HOSPITAL CAR SERVICE.

This is a County Council function and is controlled by the Joint Ambulance Committee. It is worked on an Agency basis by the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John and W.V.S.

The Downham Rural area is jointly served by the Downham Market, King's Lynn and Thetford Ambulances. Infectious Disease cases are conveyed by East Dereham and King's Lynn Infectious Disease Ambulances.

5. RED CROSS & ST. JOHN MEDICAL LOAN DEPOTS:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| (a) Wiggenhall St. Germans | Mrs. Richer |
| (b) Watlington | Mrs. Thomas |
| (c) Marham | Mrs. F. Brown |
| (d) Downham Market | Mrs. I. Burbeck |

6. COUNTY MEDICAL SERVICES:

(a) INFANT WELFARE CENTRES.

- (i) Downham Market
- (ii) Outwell
- (iii) Methwold

The Assistant County Medical Officer of Health attends at the above sessions.

In addition, Village Infant Welfare Centres are held monthly at the following villages: Fincham, Hockwold, Hilgay, Northwold, Shouldham, Southery, Wimbotsham, Stoke Ferry, Watlington, Welney, West Dereham, Magdalen, Wormegay, Feltwell, St. Germans, Nordelph and Marham.

(b) SCHOOL MINOR AILMENT CLINIC.

Local Health Office, Downham Market (every Wednesday during term).

(c) SCHOOL DENTAL CLINIC.

Local Health Office, Downham Market (no Dental Officer available).

(d) HOME HELP SERVICE.

The County Home Help Scheme is doing excellent work and Home Helps are at present available for the following Parishes and Villages: Feltwell, Hockwold, Northwold, Stoke Ferry, Wereham, West Dereham, Stow Bridge, Watlington, Magdalen, St. Germans, Methwold, Denver, Ten Mile Bank, Southery, Hilgay, Fincham, Setch, Tottenhill, Wimbotsham, Runcion Holme and Bexwell.

7. VENEREAL DISEASE CLINIC.

West Norfolk and King's Lynn Hospital:

<i>Males</i>	<i>Females and Children</i>
Tuesdays & Fridays	Tuesdays & Wednesdays
7 p.m.	at 3 p.m.

8. DISINFECTION AND DISINFESTATION.

- (i) Disinfection of premises is carried out by the Senior Sanitary Inspector's staff.
- (ii) Disinfestation of bedding, clothing, etc., which cannot be carried out by this department, are sent to the East Dereham Isolation Hospital.

9. LABORATORY SERVICES.

(a) Public Health Laboratory,
Isolation Hospital,
Bowthorpe Road,
Norwich.

Under the direction of Dr. I. M. Dowsett.

(b) Public Analyst:
W. Lincoln Sutton, Esq., F.R.I.C.,
Redwell Street,
Norwich.

SECTION C

Prevalence of and Control Over Infectious and other Diseases

SMALLPOX.

No cases were notified.

SCARLET FEVER.

Thirty cases were notified during the year as compared with thirteen in 1951.

DIPHTHERIA.

For the fifth year in succession no cases have been notified. This happy position has undoubtedly been obtained by the active immunisation of infants in the past years. A certain complacency has now arisen amongst parents, who, believing diphtheria to be a disease of the past, are failing in their parental duty to have their infants and young children immunised. The Health Visitors and District Nurses have been instructed to encourage the parents to accept this free protection from a fatal disease.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

This is carried out free of charge by the family doctor or at the Infant Welfare Centres.

Under 1 yr.	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5—9 years	10—14 years	Mid 1952 Child Population
5	82	157	181	193	1500	1317	0-4 yrs. 2458 / 5-14 yrs. 3082

Total Immunised 3,430. Percentage: 61.9.

PNEUMONIA.

Fifty-six cases were notified, and thirteen deaths from this cause were registered, as compared with twenty-five cases notified and sixteen deaths in 1951.

ERYSIPELAS.

Nine cases, ranging between the ages of 20 and 65 plus, were notified.

MEASLES.

The number of cases notified shows a very marked increase over the previous year, 649 cases as against 98 in 1951. The age group most affected was five years. There were no deaths from Measles.

INFECTIVE JAUNDICE.

Four cases were notified. The age groups varied from 5 to 45 years. The total cases notified were 50% of the 1951 figure.

ACUTE POLIOMYELITIS.

Again it is gratifying to report no incidence of this disease.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Nine cases of Pulmonary and five of Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified during 1952. This is an increase of four compared with the preceding year. There were three deaths, two from the Pulmonary and one from the Non-Pulmonary type.

The following Table indicates the incidence of Tuberculosis in the District:—

T.B. all forms			Rate per 1,000 population Downham R.D.	County Rate
Male	Female	Total		
9	5	14	0.53	0.13

CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS.

No Schools were closed on account of any Infectious disease, etc., during 1952.

SECTION D

Table No. 1.

STATISTICAL TABLES, 1952.

Causes of Death.

<i>Causes of Death.</i>				<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	....	....	1	1	2
2.	Tuberculosis, other	....	....	1	—	1
3.	Syphilitic diseases	....	....	—	—	—
4.	Diphtheria	....	....	—	—	—
5.	Whooping Cough	....	....	—	—	—
6.	Meningococcal infections	....	....	—	—	—
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	....	....	—	—	—
8.	Measles	....	....	—	—	—
9.	Other Infective and Parasitic diseases	....	....	—	—	—
10.	Malignant Neoplasm: Stomach	....	....	3	—	3
11.	Malignant Neoplasm: Lung, Bronchus	....	....	5	—	5
12.	Malignant Neoplasm: Breast	....	....	—	4	4
13.	Malignant Neoplasm: Uterus	....	....	—	2	2
14.	Other Malignant Lymphatic and Neoplasm	....	....	8	14	22
15.	Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	....	....	—	—	—
16.	Diabetes	....	....	—	—	—
17.	Vascular Lesions of nervous system	....	....	14	13	27
18.	Coronary disease: Angina	....	....	8	6	14
19.	Hypertension with Heart Disease	....	....	1	—	1
20.	Other Heart diseases	....	....	22	24	46
21.	Other Circulatory diseases	....	....	12	5	17
22.	Influenza	....	....	1	—	1
23.	Pneumonia	....	....	8	5	13
24.	Bronchitis	....	....	5	4	9
25.	Other diseases of the Respiratory system	....	....	—	1	1
26.	Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	....	....	1	—	1
27.	Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	....	....	—	1	1
28.	Nephritis, Nephrosis	....	....	1	1	2
29.	Hyperplasia of Prostrate	....	....	1	—	1
30.	Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	....	....	—	—	—
31.	Congenital Malformations	....	....	2	1	3
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	....	....	10	12	22
33.	Motor Vehicle Accidents	....	....	2	1	3
34.	All other Accidents	....	....	15	—	15
35.	Suicide	....	....	2	—	2
36.	Homicide and Operations of War	....	....	—	—	—
ALL CAUSES				123	95	218

DEATH RATE OF CHILDREN. Table No. 2.

Causes of Death of Children under One Year, 1952.

Causes of Death.	Age in Weeks.					Total
	1	2	3	4	5-52	
I. Congenital Malformations	2	3				5
II. Disease of Early Infancy						
(a) Congenital Debility						
(b) Premature Birth						
(c) Injury at birth						
(d) Atelectasis						
(e) Others						
III. Diseases of Respiratory System					3	3
IV. Diseases of Nervous System						
V. Diseases of Digestive System					2	2
VI. Tuberculosis Disease						
VII. Infectious Disease						
VIII. Syphilis						
IX. Overlaying						
X. Violence						
XI. All other causes						
Total	2	3			5	10

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

Table No. 3

Notification in Age Groups, 1952.

Disease.	Under											65 &		Removed to	
	1 year	1—	2—	3—	4—	5—	10—	15—	20—	35—	45—	Over	Total	Hospital	Deaths
Measles	6	42	44	66	72	312	77	21	8	1	—	—	649	—	—
Whooping Cough	2	1	13	7	7	12	—	1	—	—	—	—	43	—	—
Scarlet Fever	—	—	—	3	7	18	1	1	—	—	—	—	30	—	—
Pneumonia	3	4	3	2	4	14	1	2	5	10	4	4	56	—	—
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	4	3	9	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Infectious Jaundice	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	2	—	1	—	4	—	—
Dysentery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
Totals	11	47	60	78	90	357	79	26	17	12	9	7	793	—	—

MONTHLY INCIDENCE OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

Table No. 4

Other than Tuberculosis.

<i>Disease.</i>	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apl.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	<i>Total</i>
Measles	2	3	60	144	157	174	86	20	1	—	1	1	649
Whooping Cough ...	2	4	2	7	8	3	1	—	16	—	—	—	43
Scarlet Fever	—	1	7	3	2	3	3	1	1	1	2	6	30
Pneumonia ...	1	—	27	4	6	1	4	3	—	1	1	8	56
Erysipelas	—	—	5	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	1	9
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Infectious Jaundice	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	4
Dysentery	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Totals ...	5	8	102	158	174	182	95	24	18	3	6	18	793

Table No. 5.

New Cases of and Deaths from Tuberculosis, 1952.

New Cases.					Deaths.				Total
Age in Years	Respiratory Male Female		Non- Respiratory Male Female		Respiratory Male Female		Non- Respiratory Male Female		
— 1 ...									
— 5 ...									
—15 ...	1	1							
—25 ...	3	2	2	1	1				1
—35 ...				2		1			1
—45 ...							1		1
—55 ...	1	1							
—65 ...									
65 and Over									
Total	5	4	2	3	1	1	1	—	3

SECTION E

Report of the Senior Sanitary Inspector

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my second Annual Report on the work of the Health Department.

Miss J. Johncox left the Council's service on 29th February to be married, and Miss J. Carter took her place as Shorthand Typist/Clerk (Temporary) on the 15th April.

I should like to express my sincere appreciation to the Members and all Officers of the Council, particularly my colleague, Mr. Field, for their generous assistance and co-operation at all times.

1. Summary of Visits and Inspections.

Drainage and Sewerage	....	....	....	....	810
Water Supply	....	....	....	....	84
Movable Dwellings	....	....	....	....	52
Refuse Collection and Disposal	....	....	....	....	303
Salvage of Waste Paper	....	....	....	....	91
Sewage Disposal Plants	....	....	....	....	173
Petroleum	....	....	....	....	43
Infectious Disease	....	....	....	....	66
Ice Cream Premises	....	....	....	....	70
Milk and Dairies	....	....	....	....	27
Licensed Premises	....	....	....	....	19
Factories (including Bakehouses)	....	....	....	....	74
Food and Food Premises	....	....	....	....	140
Rodent Control	....	....	....	....	39
Keeping of Animals	....	....	....	....	10
Housing Inspections	....	....	....	....	530
Miscellaneous	....	....	....	....	526
Total					3057

The above figures do not include visits made by the Rodent Operative or the direct labour Staff.

2. Complaints and Nuisances.

195 complaints of a very variable nature were entered in the Register and investigated. These related mainly to housing defects, unsatisfactory drainage, smells from accumulations of noxious matter and the keeping of animals.

Abatement of the above nuisances, where substantiated, was secured by informal action, although it was necessary to serve five Statutory Notices.

3. Notices Served.

The number of written Notices served during the year was 51, as follows:—

	<i>Informal (Letters)</i>	<i>Statutory</i>	<i>Complied with</i>	<i>Complied with Notices served in 1951</i>
Housing Repairs	26	5	10	10
Drainage	10	—	9	4
Food Premises	5	—	5	3
Dirty Conditions	1	—	—	—
Water Supply	5	—	4	1
Miscellaneous	4	—	2	4
Totals	51	5	30	22

In addition, verbal notice was sufficient in many cases to bring about required improvements, or to secure the abatement of nuisances. The Notices not yet entered as "complied with" are still the subject of negotiation with the persons concerned. The housing repair situation was still very unsatisfactory, due mainly to the effect of the Rent Restrictions Acts, and, owing to neglect over a long period of years, defects in a large number of houses were more serious than repairs normally dealt with by service of notice under the Public Health Act, 1936. The only other method of getting repairs done is by means of the Housing Act, 1936, and legal and re-housing difficulties require your officers to be very selective when considering such action.

4. Food and Food Premises Inspections.

(a) General.

140 visits to food premises were made during the year, in addition to the visits made to special premises such as dairies. Many improvements were brought about, particularly in relation to the provision of hot and cold water, sanitary accommodation for employees and the general cleansing of walls, floors and ceilings, all by informal action. The general public are becoming more and more aware of the paramount importance of clean food handling. Officially notified food poisoning outbreaks have become more numerous in recent years, although no outbreaks have been reported in this district. It is considered, however, that many so-called "stomach upsets" are due to food poisoning germs. In some towns and districts, Clean Food Guilds have been formed, but it is considered that systematic inspection with advice is the best means of securing improvements.

The attention of several people was drawn to the Council's Clean Food Byelaws and the uncleanly practices soon ceased. The co-operation received was generally very good.

All the Bakers, Butchers, Fishmongers and Fish-fryers were visited during the year, and the majority of slaughterhouses. At the 31st December there were in the district:—

- 3 Fishmongers (selling wet fish)
- 10 Fish Fryers (a decrease of 3 from the previous year)
- 5 Mobile Fish Fryers
- 14 Bakers
- 20 Butchers
- 14 Slaughterhouses
- 5 Cafes
- 105 Licensed Premises
- 96 General Food Shops.

(b) Ice Cream.

At the end of the year there were 44 premises in the district at which ice cream was sold, the majority of which was pre-packed ice cream made by the large Companies. No manufacture of ice cream was carried on.

During the year, 10 new premises were Registered and 4 persons ceased to sell. No itinerant vendors were observed in the district.

41 samples of ice cream were taken, an increase of 20 over the previous year, and these were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory, Norwich, with the following results:—

	No. of Samples	Grade.			
		I	II	III	IV
Source "A"	4	2	1	—	1
„ "B"	9	5	4	—	—
„ "C"	5	3	2	—	—
„ "D"	7	4	2	1	—
„ "E"	7	3	4	—	—
„ "F"	2	1	—	—	1
„ "G"	5	4	1	—	—
„ "H"	2	2	—	—	—
Totals	41	24	14	1	2

I have examined the results of samples sent in from similar "sources" in other Norfolk Districts and generally the ice cream supplied in the County is of high bacteriological quality. The County Council take samples of ice cream in order to ascertain its chemical composition and purity.

(c) The following food was condemned as unfit for human consumption during the year:—

682½ lbs. of Beef.
 63½ lbs. of Tinned Ham.
 14 lbs. of Bacon.
 10 lbs. of Fresh Pork.
 150½ lbs. of Tea.
 65 Tins of Milk.
 29 Tins of Miscellaneous Foods.

(d) *Milk and Dairies.*

4 new Dairies and 12 Distributors were Registered during the year, making a total of 5 Dairies and 13 Distributors Registered by the Council.

As regards designated milk, 8 "Dealers'" licences in respect of "Tuberculin Tested" and 5 in respect of "Pasteurised" were issued. Investigations during the year led to the issue of "Supplementary Dealers' Licences" to persons trading from premises in other districts as follows:—

7 "Tuberculin Tested," 5 "Pasteurised" and 1 "Sterilised."

Approximately 40 Producer-Retailers are not Registerable by the Council, but a watch is kept on distribution, as this function is the Council's responsibility.

During the year the Medical Officer of Health considered it necessary to serve 5 Notices restraining the sale of milk from separate herds unless it has been pasteurised, owing to the discovery of tubercle bacilli in the milk in one case and brucella abortus in the others.

By the 31st December, 2 Notices had been rescinded in full, whilst 2 Notices in respect of single cows only and 1 Notice in respect of 2 cows remained in force. The offending cow in one herd was sold, whilst the retail sale of milk was given up in the other case.

4 Notices relating to whole herds and 1 Notice relating to an individual cow which remained in force from 1951 were all rescinded in the early months of the year. 2 offending cows from separate herds were slaughtered, 1 retail round was given up, and in the case of the remaining herd it proved impossible to trace the offending cow or cows. It is presumed in this case that excretion of brucella abortus ceased.

The sampling of milk for the detection of B. abortus and B. tuberculosis is carried out by County Council Staff.

After a report by the Medical Officer of Health, the Council were of the opinion that some control over the sale of cows proved to have excreted B. abortus was necessary, and the matter was taken up through the Rural District Council's Association.

5. **Housing.**

(a) *General.*

No Demolition Orders under the Housing Act, 1936, were made during the year, but "Undertakings" that 3 houses would not be used for human habitation were accepted from the owners concerned by the Council. The Council re-housed 2 of the displaced families.

4 houses were demolished during the year as a result of Demolition Orders made in previous years, whilst 4 more were partly demolished. Difficulties due to a defective party-wall still held up the complete demolition of one of these cottages.

As regards a cottage at Feltwell, strong action again became necessary in the case of a person who purchased and carried out alterations to a house which was subject to an operative Demolition Order. Demolition had not been secured by the end of the year.

A survey carried out by your Housing Manager in September resulted in the housing application list being almost halved. Many Authorities throughout the Country experienced a similar tendency, and the Minister of Housing and Local Government expressed the view that Local Authorities should begin to consider action towards slum clearance. The Council gave instructions for the Rural housing survey to be re-commenced so that the position of the worst houses could be found and also that action should be taken to secure the repair, closing or demolition of unfit houses where re-housing had been carried out by the Council.

Only one grant of £96/10/- was made under the repair and improvement provisions of the Housing Act, 1949. The amount of money to be spent on repairs required to bring houses up to a satisfactory

standard before a 50% grant for improvement can be made is often prohibitive for owners.

(b) *Council Houses.*

PERMANENT HOUSES.

A total of 83 houses were completed during the year, bringing the number of permanent houses constructed during the post-war housing programme to 382. 86 houses of varying types were under construction, most of which will be completed during 1953.

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION.

The Council still held 121 units of accommodation on the Stone Cross Estate, and 46 units on Feltwell Airfield. One of these units was vacant at the end of the year.

GENERALLY.

At the 31st December, 1952, the number of dwellings controlled by the Council was as follows:—

Traditional Houses	....	....	....	....	776
Pre-Fabricated Houses	....	....	....	....	76
Temporary Houses	....	....	....	....	167
Requisitioned Houses	....	....	....	....	9
Other Properties	....	....	....	....	3
Total					1031

WAITING LISTS.

In September, the number of applicants was reduced from 817 to 423, 26 applications being in respect of temporary accommodation at Stone Cross Estate. Also, owing to several applicants having more than one application in the district, the actual number of individual applications was 363. Feltwell still had the greatest need for houses, with Denver second and Southery third.

RE-HOUSING OF T.B. PATIENTS.

During the year 4 tubercular patients were re-housed.

(c) *Private Enterprise Housing.*

14 permanent and 8 temporary houses were completed during the year, whilst the construction of 18 permanent houses and 1 temporary house had been commenced. The total number of houses erected post-war by private enterprise up to 31st December, 1952, was 124 permanent and 49 temporary.

6. **Movable Dwellings.**

11 new licences were granted to Station & Use Movable Dwellings during the year, making a total of 14 licensed on the 31st December. An application for the use of land at Lynn Road, Downham Market, (Wimbotsham Parish) as a caravan site was refused by the Planning Authority.

Inspections of the sites of these licensed dwellings invariably showed the sanitary conditions to be highly satisfactory. 3 applications under the Public Health Act were refused, two of them owing to planning refusals and one case owing to the unsuitability of the dwelling.

The Council re-housed one applicant on Feltwell Airfield and decided to try and re-house a second applicant, whilst the third applicant's double-decker 'bus remained on the site at the 31st December awaiting planning action.

All except two of the licensed dwellings were modern trailer caravans.

7. Public Cleansing.

(a) Refuse Collection and Disposal.

A fortnightly "Kerbside" collection was maintained in all Parishes during the year, apart from some isolated properties which received a less frequent service. A new refuse collection vehicle was delivered during the year and the Council decided to sell the articulated vehicle which had been in service since 1946. A new truck was also delivered to replace the one in use by the Department for transporting the tip control employees and their equipment; the old vehicle had been very difficult to maintain. These new vehicles are proving satisfactory in all respects.

The Department continued to use refuse tips situate at Wimbotsham, Hilgay, Shouldham, Whittington, Feltwell and Hockwold. It is considered that some improvement in conditions took place at the first four tips mentioned above, namely: shorter "faces," the sealing of the top surfaces, general tidyness and freedom from vermin infestation.

The Council gave favourable consideration to an offer by a Commercial Firm to supply litter baskets containing advertisements throughout the district, but the scheme was eventually turned down by the Planning Authority. However, four receptacles bearing no advertisements were supplied to each of the Parishes of Feltwell, Southery and Methwold later in the year.

(b) Salvage of Waste Paper.

Approximately 15 tons of waste paper was sent to the Board Mill with which the Council have a five-year contract and a surplus of £101/5/1 resulted at the end of the year. The paper was baled by the men who collected it, outside working hours, at fixed rates per bale. Indications at the end of the year were that prices would fall, owing to a general slackening in demand.

(c) Pail Emptying.

Pail closets continued to be emptied once weekly during the daytime in the Parishes of Hilgay, Denver, Fincham, Downham West, and Feltwell. As from the 1st April, 1952, the Council decided to charge the full cost of the service to each Parish. Previous to that date a considerable part of the cost had fallen on the general rate. Some properties at Nordelph also received a service at a charge of £2 per pail per annum.

A thorough investigation was made in relation to the time taken in each Parish to collect and several adjustments were made.

The Parishes of Wereham and Wimbotsham applied for a pail-emptying service during the year, but declined the Council's offer when informed of the cost. Disposal of pail contents in the villages not served

continue to be by burial, and several complaints of nuisance were dealt with in this connection. Bulk disposal of pail contents by the Department continued to be difficult during the Summer and Winter months.

(d) *Cesspool Emptying.*

347 cesspools were emptied during the year, compared with 319 in 1951 and 270 in 1950. In addition, 29 visits were made to sewage plants and sumps, etc. The purchase of a portable night-soil tank to be used in conjunction with the Council's *Bedford* Tipper Lorry resulted in:—

- (i) curtailment of overtime working;
- (ii) less delay in complying with requests for cesspool emptying; and
- (iii) a greater number of cesspools emptied.

8. Drainage, Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

The maintenance of the sewage disposal plants serving the Stone Cross Estate and the smaller plants serving Council Housing Sites at Wormegay, Wereham, Northwold and St. Germans was continued. In addition, plants at the Hilgay, Denver, Maglalen, Methwold and Feltwell Housing Sites came into use during the year. The disposal of the effluent from the Wereham plant continued to be unsatisfactory, but no major works were undertaken as your Surveyor intended to instal a larger plant to serve more houses. Some ponding had commenced at the bottom end of the irrigation drains at the Northwold plant and as these cannot be effectively extended, consideration will soon have to be given to piping the effluent direct into the stream at the bottom of the field. All these small plants require weekly attention at least to keep them operating satisfactorily and without nuisance, but they replace a large number of troublesome cesspools which previously required much attention. At the beginning of the year the Council decided to raise the rents of houses served by sewage plants by 1s. 6d. per week. A suggestion that the cost of emptying cesspools at Council houses might be charged to the Housing Revenue Account was considered by the Council, but it was decided to retain the present scheme.

It became impossible to utilize the pump and sewage plant serving the Feltwell Airfield temporary housing site, owing to gas formation in the rising main and the pumping well had to be emptied by the cesspool emptier at frequent intervals.

The Department continued to maintain a substantial number of dykes receiving sewage throughout the district.

9. Water Supplies.

(a) *Main Piped Supplies.*

The Wisbech & District Water Board were responsible for the 3 sources of supply to the Rural District, viz.: The Northern half from the bore at Marham, the Southern half from the bore at Denton Lodge, Feltwell, and the Welney area by the purchase in bulk from the Ely R.D.C.

I am indebted to the Board's Engineer, Mr. J. K. Dawson, A.M.I.C.E., A.M.I.W.E., for the following information:—

DENTON LODGE SUPPLY.

	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Totals	Totals 1951
Rainfall	5.77 ins.	4.70 ins.	7.81 ins.	5.79 ins.	24.07 ins.	25.72 ins.
Consumption	25,160,000 gallons	25,630,000 gallons	26,550,000 gallons	24,960,000 gallons	102,300,000 gallons	97,389,000 gallons
Depth of Water	Not Recorded	Not Recorded	Not Recorded	69 ft.		

The water supply of the area continued to be highly satisfactory in quality and quantity. No contamination occurred, and the water had no marked action on old lead pipes.

The post of Chemist and Bacteriologist was vacant for seven months of the year and the number of samples taken and examined was therefore much reduced. During this period an average of eight samples a month were forwarded to the County's Public Health Laboratories in London for examination. Every sample taken at consumer's taps or after chlorination at the source of supply was shown to be of the highest bacteriological standard. No chemical analysis was made of the water supplied in this District.

The Central Area Water Mains Extension Scheme was completed during the year, the Parishes of Barton Bendish, Hilgay, West Dereham and Welney being served. The construction of a link main between Stradsett and Wereham to serve small-holdings was commenced.

The number of new connections made during the year was as follows:—

Barton Bendish	....	43	Shouldham Thorpe	....	1
Boughton	....	35	Southery	....	1
Crimplesham	....	5	Runcton Holme	....	15
Denver	....	16	Stoke Ferry	....	1
Feltwell	....	24	Stow	....	3
Fincham	....	2	Stow Bardolph	....	3
Fordham	....	2	Stradsett	....	1
Hilgay	....	40	Tottenham	....	2
Hockwold	....	6	Watlington	....	11
Marham	....	8	Welney	....	18
Methwold	....	12	Wereham	....	22
Nordelph	....	6	West Dereham	....	30
Northwold	....	7	Wiggenhall St. Germans	....	2
Roxham	....	1	Wiggenhall St. Mary	....	6
Ryston	....	7	Wimbotsham	....	5
Setch	....	4	Wormegay	....	7
Shouldham	....	5	Wretton	....	3
Total					354

(b) Small Water Supplies.

During the year, a total of 18 samples were taken for bacteriological examination, details being as follows:

In the case of a shallow well serving six cottages at Wormegay, two very unsatisfactory samples resulted, and a mains stand-pipe was eventually provided by the owner. Two samples from a shallow well at Shouldham proved to be highly satisfactory, as also did a sample from a deep bore supply serving four cottages in Feltwell Fen. Four samples from a shallow well at Hilgay proved very unsatisfactory and as a result mains water was laid on by the owner. A mains stand-pipe for four cottages at West Dereham was provided after a sample from a shallow well had shown the water to be very unsatisfactory. In the case of a shallow well at Southery the water proved unsatisfactory and the occupier stopped using water. He had a mains supply, but had been using the well water in Summer because it was very cool and suited his special purpose.

An owner at Ten Mile Bank was advised to chlorinate his rain-water cistern after an unsatisfactory sample, while in the case of another rain-water cistern serving four houses at Runciton Holme, efforts were being made to get a mains water supply laid on after two samples had shown the water to be unsatisfactory. This was difficult, however, as the owner was in receipt of National Assistance.

10. Factories.

At the 31st December there were in the District 57 factories where mechanical power was employed and five factories with no mechanical power. All these premises were visited during the year, involving 74 inspections.

Full liaison was maintained with H.M. Inspector of Factories, and the sanitary conditions generally were quite satisfactory. It was necessary to serve three Informal Notices only, all in respect of unsatisfactory sanitary accommodation, and one Notice had been complied with at the end of the year.

11. Storage of Petroleum.

There were 36 retail Petrol Stations and 77 private pumps, all licensed by your Council at the 31st December. Nineteen new licences were issued during the year. Two licences were issued in respect of storage of calcium carbide. Inspections are made from time to time to see that adequate precautions are being taken against fire.

12. Destruction of Rats and Mice.

The Council's Rodent Operative was extremely busy during the year. A depot with suitable equipment is situated at the Stone Cross Garage and an 8 h.p. van is provided for transport. From the 1st April

a charge of 6s. 4d. per hour was levied in the case of treatment at business premises, the charge previously having been 6s. Domestic premises continued to be treated free of charge.

The use of "Warfarin," a new poison, was commenced during the year and this proved very effective. The main advantage is that no pre-baiting is required and no poison prejudice is set up in the rats. In certain situations, however, the established methods of pre-baiting followed by poisoning was still very valuable.

The position obtained at the end of the year is shown by the following Table:—

	Type of Property.				
	Council's own Property	Dwelling Houses	Agricul- tural	All other (including Business & Industrial)	Total
I. Total number of properties in the District	24	6350	1584	940	8898
II. Number of properties inspected in the District during 1952 as a result: (a) of notification or (b) otherwise	(a) —	143	40	20	203
	(b) 24	642	128	166	960
III. Number of properties (under II) found to be infested by rats	Major 7	293	59	37	396
	Minor 3	113	14	37	167
IV. Number of properties (under II) found to be seriously infested by mice	—	11	—	2	13
V. Number of infested properties (under III & IV) treated by the Council	10	417	53	76	556
VI. Number of "block" control schemes carried out		32			

It was not necessary to take any legal proceedings and I am certain that the service is appreciated. Fifty per cent. of the cost of the service after deduction of income from treatment of business premises, is re-

coverable from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The treatment is most valuable when a considerable number of adjacent premises can be treated together, but with one Operator this is sometimes very difficult, and complaints have been received from occupiers who have had to pay the charge, that rats have come in again from other premises. It is felt that another man is required if really effective work is to be carried out in a district of this size.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

G. S. SENNITT,

Senior Sanitary Inspector.

